

He had wanted to participate in the Mexican War, but had failed in that objective. After this, he considered moving to St. Louis, Missouri, assured by friends in that place, who were originally from Salisbury, of making good at the Bar.<sup>45</sup> Later, his father-in-law urged him to come out to Wisconsin to try his fortune.<sup>46</sup> Ellis was disappointed with the turn of events, but he decided to remain in Salisbury and continue with his law practice.

During this period Ellis was urged by many prominent men, Archibald Henderson of Salisbury among them, to run for the State Senate which he declined to do.<sup>47</sup> His reputation as a strong, forceful speaker was widely known, and he was continually called on to speak before political gatherings, and academic societies, and upon patriotic occasions. His correspondence with the leaders of the Democratic Party indicated their respect for this youthful politician. His mail often brought a request from some student society among the colleges of this State or from those of Virginia for the honor of making him an honorary member. This particular time seems to be the turning point of Ellis' life. He was shedding the role of amateur and taking the position of a professional politician, at the advanced age of twenty-seven.

Ellis was again nominated for the House of Commons by the Democrats of Rowan on June 10, 1848. This decision was greeted with enthusiasm, not only by the party faithful in Rowan, but by the Party in other sections of the State. The Editor of the *Standard* in making the following statement represented the views of the Party throughout the State when he said, "We are highly gratified to see Maj. Ellis again in the field, and we hope the people of Rowan will stand by a public servant who is so well qualified to watch over their interests, and at the same time to give weight and dignity to the Legislative councils."<sup>48</sup>

The campaign was begun in earnest on Saturday, June 24, 1848, with the *Watchman*, as usual, out to "get" Ellis. He had been a "stone in their craw" for too long, and the paper was determined to defeat him once and for all. The editors of this newspaper urged their readers to be confident, because they said that the supporters of Ellis were not coming to his aid this time. He was, they cried, "the only Locofoco [Democrat] ever elected

---

<sup>45</sup>James L. Cowan to John W. Ellis, July 25, 1847, in this volume.

<sup>46</sup>Philo White to John W. Ellis, September 27, 1847, in this volume.

<sup>47</sup>Archibald Henderson to John W. Ellis, July 24, 1847, in this volume.

<sup>48</sup>*North Carolina Standard*, June 21, 1848.